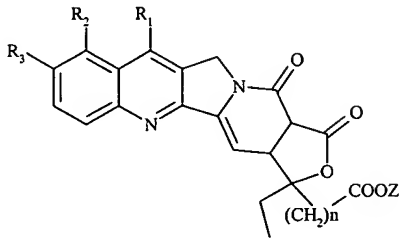
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1.-22. (Canceled).

23. (New) A compound of formula (II)



(II)

where:

R_1 is hydrogen or a -C(R_5)=N-O-R_4 group, in which R_4 is hydrogen or a straight or branched C_1-C_5 alkyl or C_1-C_5 alkenyl group, or a C_3-C_{10} cycloalkyl group, or a straight or branched (C_3-C_{10}) cycloalkyl - (C_1-C_5) alkyl group, or a C_6-C_{14} aryl group, or a straight or branched (C_6-C_{14}) aryl - (C_1-C_5) alkyl group, or a heterocyclic group or a straight or branched heterocyclo - (C_1-C_5) alkyl group, said heterocyclic group containing at least one heteroatom selected from an atom of nitrogen, optionally substituted with an (C_1-C_5) alkyl group, and/or an atom of oxygen and/or of sulphur; said alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, cycloalkylalkyl, aryl, aryl-alkyl, heterocyclic or heterocyclo-alkyl groups can optionally be substituted with one or more groups selected from the group consisting of: halogen, hydroxy, C_1-C_5 alkyl, C_1-C_5 alkoxy, phenyl, cyano, nitro, and - NR_6R_7, where R_6 and R_7, which may be the same or different, are hydrogen, straight or branched (C_1-C_5) alkyl, the -COOH group or one of its pharmaceutically acceptable esters; or the -

$CONR_8R_9$ group, where R_8 and R_9, which may be the same or different, are hydrogen, straight or branched (C_1-C_5) alkyl; or

R_4 is a (C_6-C_{10}) aroyl or (C_6-C_{10}) arylsulphonyl residue, optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from: halogen, hydroxy, straight or branched C_1-C_5 alkyl, straight or branched C_1-C_5 alkoxy, phenyl, cyano, nitro, $-NR_{10}R_{11}$, where R_{10} and R_{11}, which may be the same or different, are hydrogen, straight or branched C_1-C_5 alkyl; or:

R_4 is a polyaminoalkyl residue; or

R_4 is a glycosyl residue;

R_5 is hydrogen, straight or branched C_1-C_5 alkyl, straight or branched C_1-C_5 alkenyl, C_3-C_{10} cycloalkyl, straight or branched (C_3-C_{10}) cycloalkyl - (C_1-C_5) alkyl, C_6-C_{14} aryl, straight or branched (C_6-C_{14}) aryl - (C_1-C_5) alkyl;

R_2 and R_3, which may be the same or different, are hydrogen, hydroxy, straight or branched C_1-C_5 alkoxy;

n = 1 or 2,

Z is selected from hydrogen, straight or branched C_1-C_4 alkyl;

the N_1-oxides, the racemic mixtures, their individual enantiomers, their individual diastereoisomers, their mixtures, and their pharmaceutically acceptable salts.

24. (New) A compound according to claim 23, in which, in formula (II), n is 1.

25. (New) A compound according to claim 24, selected from the group consisting of:

{10-[(E)-(ter-butoxyimino)methyl]-3-ethyl-1,13-dioxo-11,13-dihydro-1H,3H-furo[3',4':6,7]indolizino[1,2-b]quinolin-3-yl}acetic acid

(10-{(E)-[(benzyloxy)imino]methyl}-3-ethyl-1,13-dioxo-11,13-dihydro-1H,3H-furo[3',4':6,7]indolizino[1,2-b]quinolin-3-yl)acetic acid

(3-ethyl-1,13-dioxo-11,13-dihydro-1H,3H-furo[3',4':6,7]

indolizino[1,2-b]quinolin-3-yl)acetic acid, and

ter-butylic ester of (3-ethyl-1,13-dioxo-11,13-dihydro-1H,3H-furo[3',4':6,7]

indolizino[1,2-b]quinolin-3-yl)acetic acid.

26. (New) A process for the preparation of a formula (II) compound according to claim 23 in which R_1 is hydrogen, comprising:

a) reduction of the keto group in position 19 of the camptothecin, optionally substituted with R_2 and R_3 have the meanings as in formula (II), to yield the derivative 19,20-dihydroxy;

b) treatment of the derivative obtained in step a) with periodate and acetic acid, to obtain the opening of the E ring;

c) Reformatsky reaction on the derivative obtained in step b);

d) treatment of the derivative obtained in step c) with PDC with formation of the E ring and, if so desired;

e) transformation of the Z group to hydrogen.

27. (New) A process for the preparation of a formula (II) compound according to claim 23 in which R_1 is a $-C(R_5)=N-O-R_4$ group, comprising:

a) transformation of the camptothecin, optionally substituted with R_2 and R_3, to 7-(di-methoxymethyl)camptothecin;

b) reduction of the keto group in position 19 of the 7-(di-methoxymethyl)camptothecin, optionally substituted with the envisaged meanings of R_2 and R_3, to yield a derivative 19,20-dihydroxy;

c) treatment of the derivative obtained in step b) with periodate and acetic acid, to obtain opening of the E ring;

d) Reformatsky reaction on the derivative obtained in step c);

e) treatment of the derivative obtained in step d) with PDC with formation of the E ring;

f) treatment of the compound obtained in step e) with an oxime of formula R_4ONH_2 and, if so desired,

g) transformation of the Z group to hydrogen.

28. (New) A pharmaceutical composition containing a therapeutically effective amount of at least one compound according to claim 23 in an admixture with a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle or excipient.